

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/512,954

Examiner

Lin Ye

Applicant(s)

ACOSTA-SERAFINI ET AL.

Art Unit

2615

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to the amendment filed on 22 November 2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-23.
3. The drawings filed on 25 February 2000 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Applicant's amendment filed on 11/22/2004 has been fully considered and they are persuasive.

Referring claim 1, the applicant argues that Lee reference does not teach or suggest to provide integration control circuitry configured to generate **pixel-specific integration control signals** delivered to the selected pixel, **independent** of other pixels, **based on dynamic range specification input** provided by the input interface circuit, because the Lee has a common reset signal sent to every pixel in a common row, and the sensing node output of each pixel in a row to a source follower amplifier. The Katsuma reference teaches the adjustment of color levels of a scanned image based on dynamic range input. But the Katsuma reference does not teach the dynamic range input by an operator is **for generation of integration control signals** as required by the claim 1. The examiner agrees.

For claims 1-18, the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest an imager system provided in a semiconductor substrate comprising: an input interface circuit connected to accept a dynamic range specification input for the array pixels; integration control circuitry connected to access a selected pixel of the array to read the sense node electrical signal of the selected pixel, and configured to generate pixel-specific integration control signals delivered to the selected pixel, independent of other pixels, based on dynamic range specification input provided by the input interface circuit, used in combination with all of the other limitations of claim 1.

For claims 19-23, please see the reasons for allowance from last office action mailed on 6/18/2004.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

2. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
 - a. Yadid-Pecht et al. U.S 6,175,383 discloses a wide dynamic range image sensor provides individual pixel reset to vary the integration time of individual pixels.
 - b. Simpkins U.S. 5,889,883 discloses a sensor system including a photo detector interface circuit (115) that has wide input dynamic range for control the senor integration time as shown in Figure 5.
3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lin Ye whose telephone number is (571) 272-7372. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:00AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James J. Groody can be reached on (571) 272-7950. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

James J. Groody
James J. Groody
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Art Unit 262-2615

Lin Ye
April 19, 2005